

Amendments to the Substitute Specification (filed April 26, 2004):

Please replace paragraph [0002] with the following amended paragraph:

[0002] The invention relates to the field of data ~~back-up~~ processing systems, and in particular to a distributed RAID and location independence caching system.

Please replace paragraph [0008] with the following amended paragraph:

[0008] ~~Therefore,~~ There is a need for an improved information ~~back-up~~ processing system.

Please replace paragraph [0009] with the following amended paragraph:

[0009] Briefly, according to an aspect of the present invention, an information ~~backup~~ processing system includes a plurality of computing units, which each combines or bridges a disk I/O host bus adapter card and a network interface card of the computing unit to implement a distributed RAID and global caching.

Please replace paragraph [0011] with the following amended paragraph:

[0011] FIG. 1 is a block diagram illustration of a distributed information ~~backup~~ processing system.

Please replace paragraph [0012] with the following amended paragraph:

[0012] FIG. 2 is a block diagram illustration of an alternative embodiment distributed information ~~backup~~ processing system.

Please replace paragraph [0017] with the following amended paragraph:

[0017] FIG. 1 is a block diagram illustration of an information ~~backup~~ processing system 10. The system 10 includes a plurality of computing devices 12-15 (e.g., personal computers/workstations) that are interconnected via a packet switched data network 16, such as for example a local area network (LAN), a wide area network (WAN), etc. Each of the computing devices 12-15 communicates for example with an associated database management system (DBMS) and file system. In this embodiment, each of the computing devices 12-15 includes an associated network interface card (NIC) 18-21, respectively, that handles input/output (I/O) between the associated computing unit and the network 16. Each computing unit 12-15 also includes a disk input/output host bus adapter card

24-27, respectively, which communicates with a disk drive 30-33 of the associated computing unit. The disk drive may include SCSI drive.

Please replace paragraph [0020] with the following amended paragraph:

[0020] FIG. 2 is a block diagram illustration of an alternative embodiment information ~~backup-processing~~ system 70. The embodiment of FIG. 2 is substantially the same as the embodiment of FIG. 1 with the principal exception that the functions of the NIC, the disk driver and the device driver/bridge are integrated onto a single card/integrated circuit with an embedded processor. Referring to FIG. 2, this system includes a plurality of computing devices 72-75 that are interconnected via a packet switched data network 76. Each of the computing devices 72-75 communicates for example with an associated database management system (DBMS) and a file system. In this embodiment, each of the computing devices 72-75 includes an integrated interface card (IIC) 78-81, respectively, that handles input/output (I/O) between the associated computing unit and the network 16, and also I/O between the computing unit and an associated local disk 84-87. Each disk (e.g., 84) together with the disks in other the computing nodes (e.g., disks 81-83) forms a distributed RAID, which appears to a user as a large and reliable logic disk space.

Please add the following new paragraph between paragraphs [0001] and [0002]:

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